

"But it was urged that the Bank had temporary difficulties to encounter, and that it behoved them to adopt some mode of granting relief to that important public body. The House of Commons, however, knew nothing of this. No application was made to them by the Bank, nor did it appear even that application had been made for the Order in Council; on the contrary, it appeared that this facetious council, instead of examining the Directors of the Bank, acted entirely upon the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nay, what added to his surprise was, that *not one of the Bank Directors*, who had seats in that House, had ever *come forward and expressed an opinion upon the subject*. Some information was certainly necessary before the House sanctioned so novel and dangerous a measure. They had heard of the Bank a short time ago lending two millions to Government, and they had also heard of the dividends on Bank Stock increasing. Was it not material to be informed therefore how they had come to stop payment at a time when their affairs seemed to be going on so prosperously?"

—MR. SHERIDAN. Speech 28th Feb. 1807.

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PAPER AGAINST GOLD:

BEING AN EXAMINATION

OF THE

Report of the Bullion Committee:

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

TO THE

TRADESMEN AND FARMERS

IN AND NEAR SALISBURY.

LETTER XIII.

Alleged ability of the Bank—Proceedings out of doors for what was called support of Public Credit—Mansion House Meeting—Brook Watson—Quarter Sessions Resolutions—Privy Council Resolutions—Representations of the Venal Prints relative to these Resolutions—Real Origin of the Mansion House Meeting—Directors prevail upon Mr. Pitt to have a private Meeting of Bankers at his House—Plan of a public Meeting there laid—Peep behind the Curtain—Meeting of the Bank Proprietors—Declaration of the Governors, Mr. Bosanquet and Mr. Thornton—These Declarations compared with the private Minute of the Bank—Private Minute of the Bank, expressing their alarm for the Safety of the House, and for calling upon Mr. Pitt to know when he would interfere.

Gentlemen,

When we look at the boast, referred to in the words of my Motto, and consider how many boasts of the same sort the Minister had uttered, and which he had continued in the habit of uttering, down almost to the very hour of the Bank Stoppage, we cannot help wondering that he could longer endure his existence. What, then, will be the astonishment of posterity, to hear him, in a few months

[738]

after that event, speak of it and of the measures growing out of it, as the happy means of *safety to the country*; and what will be their shame to find, that he was still confided in and supported?

As we proceed with the history of the measures of *remedy* which were now adopted, we must not fail to pay particular attention to the *opinions and doctrines* at this time expressed and laid down by the Minister and his adherents, especially by those of his adherents, who had a more immediate interest in the concerns of the Bank of England. We must take care to bear in mind what they *then* said as to the *origin*, of the Order of Council for the Stoppage of Gold and Silver payments at the Bank; what they said as to the *nature and necessity* of the measure; what they said as to the *ability* of the Bank to resume its payments; and what they said as to the *time* of such resumption. What they *then* said, as to all these points, we must take care to bear in mind; because, we shall have to compare it with what the same persons have said since, and have to shew how, in this case, as well as in so many others, the nation has been led on, by degrees, to acquiesce in what, if proposed to it all at once, would have made it shrink with affright, or fired it with indignation.

Before the House of Commons met, the day after the Message and Order of Council had been laid before it, that is to say, on the 28th of February, 1797, the Anti-Jacobin adherents of the Minister had been hard at work *out of doors*. A meeting had been called in the Mansion House of the city of London consisting of *Merchants, Bankers, and others*, the Chairman being

the Lord Mayor, whose name was BROOK WATSON, who then, or very soon afterwards, filled the lucrative office of *Commissary General to the Army*, and who was, in a very few years after that, made a *Baronet*. The persons assembled upon this occasion proclaimed their resolution *not to refuse* bank notes in payment of any sums due to them, and to use their utmost endeavours to make *all their payments* in the same manner * ; which, as you will perceive, Gentlemen, was neither more nor less than resolving, that they would do their utmost to keep up their own credit and consequence, and, in fact, to preserve themselves from instant ruin.

Similar Resolutions were passed in the country, where the Quarter Sessions happening to be then taking place, the Resolutions were sent forth from the Bench, with, of course, something of a magisterial weight and authority, as will be seen in the instance of the magistrates of Surrey, who, with Lords Grantley and Onslow at their head, appear to have led the way†. The Privy Council (pray read

* MANSION-HOUSE, LONDON.—

February 27, 1797.—At a meeting of Merchants, Bankers, &c. held here this day, to consider of the steps which it may be proper to take, to prevent Embarrassments to Public Credit, from the effects of any ill-founded or exaggerated Alarms, and to support it with the utmost exertions at the present important conjuncture.—The LORD MAYOR in the Chair;—RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,—That we, the undersigned, being highly sensible how necessary the preservation of Public Credit is at this time, do most readily hereby declare, that we will not refuse to receive Bank Notes in payment of any sum of money to be paid to us; and we will use our utmost endeavours to make all our payments in the same manner.—BROOK WATSON.

The resolution lies for signing at the following places; London Tavern, Bishopsgate-Street; Crown and Anchor Tavern, Strand; St. Alban's Tavern, St. Alban's-Street; Three-Crown Coffee-house, in Three-Crown Court, Borough; and at Lloyd's Coffee-house.

† SURREY.—At the General Quarter Session of the Peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, holden at Saint Mary, Newington, by adjournment, in and for the said County, on Thursday the 2d day of March, 1797.—We whose names are hereunto

their names all over) had also a meeting upon the subject, and it was quite curious to see the Judges and great pensioners and even the *Ministers themselves*, not excepting the *Lord High Treasurer*, publishing their promises to receive and to pay bank notes, and, as far as depended on them individually, to support the circulation of those notes †.

subscribed, being desirous to contribute, as far as we can, to the support of the public and commercial credit of the kingdom, at this important crisis, do hereby agree and bind ourselves to receive the Notes of the Bank of England in all payments as Money, and to support, as far as depends on us individually, their circulation for the public benefit.

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|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Grantley, | Edward Layton, |
| Onslow and Cranley, | John Morgan, |
| John Frederick, | Peter Broadley, |
| Joseph Shaw, | M. Nolan, |
| Thomas Evance, | George Shepley, |
| Rd. Carpenter Smith, | Thomas Barrow, |
| George Griffin Stone- | Francis Lawson, |
| street, | John Jos. Shermer, |
| James Bulcock, | Robert Forrest, |
| William Hill, | John Pardon, |
| Robert Burnett, | Edward Morris, |
| Gideon Fournier, | Vitruvius Lawes, |
| Benjamin Robertson, | Samuel Marryatt, |
| Jonathan Stonard, | W. D. Best, |
| James Feilding, | Arthur Onslow. |

Ordered, That the Clerk of the Peace do cause the above to be forthwith advertised in the Morning Papers.—*By the Court,*
LAWSON.

‡ At the Council Chamber, Whitehall, the 28th of February, 1797,—Present,—The Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.—We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being desirous to contribute, as far as we can, to the support of the public and commercial credit of this Kingdom at this important crisis, do hereby agree and bind ourselves to receive the Notes of the Bank of England in all payments as Money, and to support, as far as depends on us individually, their circulation.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| J. Cantuar, | Bute, |
| Loughborough, C. | Pembroke, |
| Chatham, P. | Westmorland, |
| Dorset, | Chesterfield, |
| Leeds, | Sandwich, |
| Montrose, | Drummond Hay Kin- |
| Roxburgh, | noul, |
| Portland, | Macclesfield, |
| Townshend, | Spencer, |
| Cornwallis, | Liverpool, |

These Meetings and their Resolutions furnished the venal prints with the pretence for asserting, that the alarm was at an end; that the people had had time to reflect, and that reflection could not fail to convince them, that there was no room for suspecting the solidity of the Bank. The meetings and resolutions (to which latter, in London there were soon obtained thousands of signatures) were represented as having been perfectly *voluntary*; that they were the spontaneous effects of *pure public-spirit*, working in the breasts of *loyal* and *disinterested* men, and, of course, that those who did not come forward to resolve, or to sign, were *disloyal* men.

Gentlemen, stop with me here for a minute. Some of *you* may have been induced, by these venal writers, to think ill of all those of your neighbours, who disapproved of Mr. PITT and his deeds; some of *you* may have been thus led, by the representations of these writers, to hate your honest neighbours, to stigmatize them as Jacobins, and to suspect them, in fact, of treasonable designs; some of *you* may, from this corrupt and deadly source, have had your minds so poisoned, and so perverted from their natural bias, as to have contributed towards those fatal divisions in the nation, the effect of which, it is to be feared, your children's children will rue. Of such of you, therefore, as answer to this description, let me beg the earnest attention, while I develop the true source of the above-mentioned meetings and resolves, which, as you have seen, were described, by the venal writers, as being *perfectly voluntary*, and flowing from *pure public-spirit*.

You will bear in mind, that the Order in Council was signed on Sunday, the 26th of February, and that it was laid before the House of Commons on Monday the 27th, on which last-mentioned day, the Mansion House Meeting, Mr. BROOK

Mornington,
Gower Sutherland,
Sydney,
Grenville,
Onslow and Cranley,
Walsingham,
Kenyon,
Malmesbury,
Auckland,
St. Helen's,
Henry Addington,
W. PITT,

HENRY DUNDAS,
Cha. Townshend,
C. F. Greville, V. C.
J. C. VILLIERS,
James Greville,
R. P. Arden,
Wm. Wynne,
THOMAS STEELE,
A. Macdonald,
S. Douglas,
W. Windham.

WATSON in the Chair, took place. The next, Tuesday, the 28th, the Minister, in opening the way for his first motion about the law to sanction the Order in Council, said *in allusion to this meeting*: "With respect to the first step to be considered, the state of the Bank, that already has, in a great measure, been ascertained by the *confidence of public opinion*. Of this public opinion the most *unequivocal and satisfactory proofs have been afforded, even within the short space that has elapsed since the minute of Council has been issued*. It has been clearly *evinced*, that there is no doubt entertained with respect to the solidity of the Bank to answer all the demands of its creditors." Thus he appeared to consider the resolution of the Meeting of the Bankers and Merchants as expressive of the opinions and feelings of the nation at large, and, of course, as being a voluntary act, an act of *their own*, an act not, by any means, dictated by him, or by the Bank, nor hatched or contrived by them. Thus the thing appeared to the world; thus it appeared to the *"most thinking people in all Europe"*; this was its outside look; but, let us now take a peep behind the curtain.

For a while no official documents were laid before Parliament, relating to the Stoppage. This was avoided by one means or another. But, it could not be for ever avoided; and, at last, some of the papers were laid before the House of Commons; but, by the time that these got printed, the public was lulled again, and the papers passed with little or no notice. Amongst these papers was a minute of the BANK DIRECTORS, respecting an "Interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Pitt) on the 24th of February 1797;" which, you will observe, was on the *Friday before*, the Bank having issued Gold on Saturday for the last time. On the Thursday the run upon the Bank had been very hard; and, the measure of Stoppage of cash-payments seems to have then been looked upon as settled. With this measure in their eye, the Bank Directors and Mr. Pitt did what we shall see recorded in the following minute of the Bank Directors' Proceedings, under the date just mentioned, of the 24th of February, 1797. "The Governor and Deputy Governor this day waited on Mr. Pitt, to mention to him, that it would, in the present circumstances, be

"highly requisite, that some general meeting of the bankers and chief merchants of London should be held, in order to bring on some resolution for the support of the public credit in this alarming crisis; and they took the liberty to recommend to Mr. Pitt, to have a private meeting of some of the chief bankers at his house to-morrow, at three o'clock, in which the plan for a more general meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday next might be laid, in the propriety of which Mr. Pitt agreed, and said he would summon a previous meeting for to-morrow accordingly. This was communicated by the Governor to the Committee."

Thus, Gentlemen, were "the most thinking people in Europe" treated. Here you see the origin; here you see the real cause, of the public spirited meeting at the Mansion House; here you see how those pure and disinterested persons were put in motion. You have, heretofore, seen the show; but, you have now seen, as to this part of it, the funnels, pulleys, pegs and wires; and the only misfortune is, that you see them a little too late; though, I trust, that the exposition may yet do some good, and, at any rate, it must, I should think, make you a little less credulous in future, a little less inclined to believe every word that comes forth under appearances like those above described.

While Meetings were going on, in such a jovial way, in all other quarters, it would have been strange indeed if the Bank itself had not had its meeting. This took place on Thursday, 2nd of March. The Order of Council had been issued on the Sunday, 26th of February; it had been laid before the House of Commons on the 27th; on the same day the Meeting had taken place at the Mansion-House; on the 28th (as we shall presently see) the conduct of the Bank began to be discussed in parliament, and it had been asserted there, that the Order of Council was the sole work of the government and not of the Bank; the manifest intention of which was to cause it to be believed, that the government forced the Bank not to pay its creditors agreeably to its promissory notes; and, that the Bank neither wanted nor wished any such measure on its own account. Declarations to this amount had been made in parliament; but, it appears, that a repetition of them at a Bank Meeting was thought necessary; and accordingly a meeting took place; or,

to use their own language, "A Court of PROPRIETORS was held" on the day just-mentioned, namely, the 2nd of March.

At this meeting at the Bank, where one might have expected to see the Directors and Proprietors clothed in sack-cloth and ashes, the first thing done was, the passing of a vote of THANKS to the Directors for having acted agreeably to the Order of Council, that is to say, for having availed themselves of this Order to refuse payment of their promissory notes, to refuse payment of their just debts legally demanded. They had been guilty of a violation of the law, and for that violation they were thanked by their constituents, the stock Proprietors, who, in fact, were the Debtors of the holders of Bank notes! Having, with an unanimous voice, dispatched this part of the business of the day, the GOVERNOR of the Bank took, it appears from the report of the proceedings, the opportunity of publicly declaring (in a way that it might get into print) that the Bank Directors had made no application to the government for an Order for the stoppage of Cash payments at the Bank. Mr. BOSANQUET, who, it seems, was a Director, declared, that the measure "was not adopted at the instance of those concerned in the direction of the Bank;" and Mr. THORNTON, also a Director, said, "that he wished it to be understood explicitly, that the Order in Council was not issued at the instance of the Bank Directors." Mr. BOSANQUET called the stoppage "a great state measure;" a measure dictated by "national policy." He said it was "meant to operate only for a short time;" and that "he earnestly hoped" (how different from the language of Mr. Randle Jackson and the present governor of the Bank); yes, "he EARNESTLY HOPED, that the Bank, which was quite able, would soon be PERMITTED to pay its notes in cash, in the same manner that it had formerly done." *

* The following is the Report, taken entire, from the Morning Chronicle of the 3rd of March, 1797. —

"Yesterday a Court of Proprietors was held at the Bank.—The GOVERNOR of the Bank, after the Order in Council, of the 26th of February, was read, stated, that the Court of Directors had thought it their duty to acquiesce in the Order, and hoped that they had acted in conformity to the opinion and wishes of the Proprietors of

A COURT OF
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When, Gentlemen, you have read through the report of the Bank Proceedings of the day here referred to, and I beseech you to read every word of it, you will, doubtless, be astonished at the hardihood of men, who could, under such circumstances, hold such language. What! thank the Directors for not paying their

Bank Stock.—MR. HARMAN moved, "that it is the opinion of this Court, that the thanks of the Proprietors of Bank Stock are due to the Court of Directors for their acquiescence in the Order in Council, and for their speedy communication thereof to this Court."—The motion was put and carried unanimously.—MR. ALLERDYCE asked, *whether the application had been made from the Bank to Government, for the Order in Council, to prohibit them from issuing specie?*—The Governor of the Bank replied, that no such application had been made by the Court of Directors, but that the Bank having experienced an unexampled drain of specie for some time past, that Court had thought it their duty to acquaint the Minister of the Country with the circumstance, that he might take what measures he might deem necessary, and at the same time remove all responsibility for such measures from the Direction. He added, that a Secret Committee of the House of Commons had been appointed to enquire into the state of the Bank accounts, and that the Court of Directors were fully persuaded that the result of that enquiry would be a report of the perfect solidity of the Corporation.—MR. SANSON wished to be informed whether there was any precedent for the House of Commons appointing a Committee to enquire into the affairs of the Bank? In his opinion, if a Committee was to be appointed, it ought to be a Committee chosen from the Proprietary; but after the assurance which they had from the Directors of the solidity of the Bank capital, he saw no necessity for any enquiry at all.—A Proprietor stated, that there was a precedent for the measure on the Journals of the House of Commons, in 1696.—MR. MANNING said, he had examined into the proceedings of the House of Commons, in 1696, and found that there was not the smallest resemblance between that and the present measure. At that time the Bank had been established for only two years, their Notes were at a discount all over the Kingdom, and the silver coinage was called in, circumstances which were totally different from the present.—MR.

promissory notes! Thank them for this! The Proprietors of Bank Stock, who were the persons composing the Meeting upon this occasion, were the persons who owed the amount of the Bank notes; they were the debtors of the note-holders; the Directors were their agents. So that, here we see a parcel of people, who had issued great quantities of promissory notes, as-

BOSANQUET begged leave to trouble the Court with a very few words. He said that the Order in Council was to be considered entirely as a great state measure, which was not adopted at the instance of those concerned in the direction of the Bank. The Court of Directors, in the present state of public affairs, had considered it to be their duty to keep the Minister of the Country informed respecting the situation of the Bank. For some time past there had been an unexampled run for specie upon the Bank, and this they communicated to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, leaving him to adopt what measures he might think proper. The consequence was, the Order in Council, of the 26th of February, was issued. It would have been absurd in the Directors of the Bank to have resisted this Order, because the Minister must have been supposed to be in possession of a great deal of information to which they had no access, and to be in the knowledge of circumstances of which they were not aware; besides, that there was no knowing what might have been the consequences had the unusual drain for cash, which they had experienced, been continued for any length of time. They complied, therefore, with the Order of his Majesty's Council, understanding it to have been dictated by national policy, and meant to operate only for a short time. He had no hesitation in saying that the affairs of the Bank were in a state of the greatest affluence and prosperity, that they had even a considerable surplus, and that he earnestly hoped they would SOON BE PERMITTED to pay their Notes in cash in the same manner as they had formerly done.—MR. THORNTON wished it to be understood explicitly, that the Order in Council was not issued at the instance of the Bank Directors; that their accounts were not tendered to the House of Commons for examination, and that they neither asked nor wished for the partnership and guarantee of Government.—There being no other business before the Court, they adjourned to yesterday fortnight, when the dividends become due.

semble together, and *thank, aye, and publicly thank*, their agents for having refused, *illegally refused, payment of those notes!* Gentlemen, our venal prints may talk as they please; they may refer us to what instances they choose; but any thing equal to this, any such instance of cool assurance, I defy them to produce from the history of the world, or, even from the works of imagination.

But, as yet, we have not seen these proceedings in their true colours. We have seen them in colours pretty strong; but we have not seen them as they will appear when we have taken another look at the Bank documents, which were afterwards laid before parliament, and which, as was before observed, never got out fairly to the knowledge of the people. We have seen these Bank Directors making public declarations, that *they had no hand at all in the Stoppage; that they did not apply for the Order in Council; that it was a measure of the government; that it was a state measure; and that they earnestly hoped soon to be PERMITTED to resume their payments in cash.* This is what they told *the public* on the 2nd of March. And, it was not only at the Bank meeting that this declaration was made. It was repeatedly made in the House of Commons; but, we will, at present, confine ourselves to what was said by the Bank Directors themselves.

Such, then, were their declarations on the 2nd of March. Now, then, let us see what they had been at *in secret* with the Minister, during the *nine days before*. On the 21st of February, they, observing, with great uneasiness, the large and constant decrease in their cash, held a particular consultation on the subject, and perceiving that their cash was reduced to a certain sum, of which certain sum, be it observed, *they do not state the amount*, they came to a resolution, to go to Mr. Pitt, and tell him "how their cash was circumstanced" they did so, and Mr. Pitt observed to them (and you will laugh heartily at the observation) "that the alarm of invasion, was now become much more general than he could think necessary," they then, pressed Mr. Pitt, to make some declaration in parliament, upon this subject, "in order to ease the public mind." This is a pretty specimen enough of the intercourse that existed between these parties, and will serve to explain the rea-

son for many of the speeches that we have, at different times, heard *. MR. PITT,

* *Resolution of the Court of Directors, and Deputation's Interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 21st of February, 1797.*—The Committee observing, with great uneasiness, the large and constant decrease in the cash, held a particular consultation on that subject this day; and on examination into the state of the cash *since the beginning of this year*, they found that in the course of the month of January there had been a decrease of *l.* and since the beginning of this month a farther loss of *l.* and that the cash was now reduced to between *l.* and about *l.* value, in bullion and foreign coin, about the value of *l.* in silver bullion. Perceiving also, by the constant calls of the bankers from all parts of the town for cash, that there must be *some extraordinary reasons for this drain*, arising, probably, from the alarms of an expected invasion; the Committee, after maturely considering the matter, resolved to send a notice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of the situation of matters at the Bank: and to explain exactly to him *how the cash is circumstanced*, that he may, if possible and proper, strike out some means of *alleviating the public alarms*, and stopping this apparent disposition in people's minds for having a large deposit of cash in their houses. The Governor, Deputy Governor, with Mr. Darell and Mr. Bosanquet, were deputed to wait upon Mr. Pitt; who went to him; and after describing to him the anxiety of mind which all the Directors were under on this subject, they explained to Mr. Pitt the exact particulars above-mentioned. Mr. Pitt seemed aware that this unusual drain of cash from the Bank must arise from the alarm of an invasion, which he observed *was now become much more general than he could think necessary*. He said, that by all his informations he could not learn of any hostile preparations of consequence making in France to invade this country, except the fleet which was re-fitting at Brest, after being driven off from the coast of Ireland; but that he could not answer that no partial attack on this country would be made by such a mad and desperate enemy as we had to deal with. The deputation pressed on Mr. Pitt to declare something of this kind in Parliament, in order to *ease the public mind*. Mr. Pitt also mentioned, that he hoped the

however, did, it seems, press them, in his turn, "to endeavour to obtain a supply of gold from abroad," and the Governor told him they would do what they could in that way.

On the 22nd of February they had another interview with MR. PITT, and they gave GOLDSMIDT and ELIASON orders for the purchase of gold at *Hamburgh*. But, we no where find any account of the success of this order, which was, besides, rendered useless by the Order of Council, which rendered Gold unnecessary. †

On the 24th of February they had another interview with MR. PITT; and, what they say as to this interview we must pay particular attention to. At a committee consisting of the whole Court, it appeared that the cash was going away faster than ever, "which gave such an alarm for the SAFETY OF THE HOUSE" (mark the words) that no time was lost in sending a deputation to MR. PITT, to ask him how far they might venture to go in paying cash, and "when HE would think it necessary to INTERFERE." MR. PITT told them, that this was an affair of such importance, that he must be prepared with some resolution to bring forward in the Council. §

Committee would, in the present situation of matters, think it necessary to endeavour at obtaining a supply of gold from foreign countries, which the Governor told him they were considering about, and should do what they could therein.

† Interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 22nd of February, 1797.—Messrs. Goldsmid and Eliason attended the Committee this day, and were directed to give farther orders to *Hamburgh* for the purchase of gold; and were told that an application would immediately be made to the minister to order a frigate or armed sloop to go to *Hamburgh* to take in such gold as might be bought, and also to desire that the restriction on the captains of the packets, not to take any gold on board at *Hamburgh* for this country, might be taken off. The Governor and Deputy Governor waited on MR. PITT on this subject, promised to apply to the Admiralty for directions about sending out a frigate or armed sloop; and that he would apply to the Postmaster General to give the orders to the captains of the packets.

§ Interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 24th of February, 1797.—At

Thus, you see, Gentlemen, the Stoppage measure clearly originated in the representation of the Bank Directors; and, which is very well worthy of your marked attention, MR. BOSANQUET was one of the persons, deputed to wait upon MR. PITT on this last-mentioned occasion. The shuffle of saying, that the Bank Directors were afraid that the drain might injure the "public service" is too paltry, in any view of the

a Committee of the whole Court held this day, it appeared that the loss of cash yesterday was above £. and that about £. were already drawn out this day, which gave such an alarm for THE SAFETY OF THE HOUSE, that the Deputy Governor and MR. BOSANQUET were desired to wait on MR. PITT to mention to him these circumstances, and to ask him how far he thought the Bank might venture to go on paying cash, and when he would think it necessary TO INTERFERE before our cash was so reduced as might be detrimental to the immediate service of the State. MR. PITT said, this was a matter of great importance, and that he must be prepared with some resolution to bring forward in the Council, for a Proclamation to stop the issue of cash from the Bank, and to give the security of parliament to the notes of the Bank. In consequence of which he should think it might be proper to appoint a Secret Committee of the House of Commons to look into the state of the Bank affairs; which they assured him the Bank were well prepared for, and would produce to such a Committee. MR. PITT also observed that he should have no objection to propose to Parliament, in case of a Proclamation, to give parliamentary security for Bank notes. The Governor and Deputy Governor this day waited on MR. PITT, to mention to him, that it would in the present circumstances be highly requisite that some general meeting of the bankers and chief merchants of London should be held in order to bring on some resolution for the support of the public credit in this alarming crisis; and they took the liberty to recommend to MR. PITT, to have a private meeting of some of the chief bankers at his house to-morrow, at three o'clock, in which the plan for a more general meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday next might be laid; in the propriety of which MR. PITT agreed, and said he would summon a previous meeting for to-morrow accordingly. This was communicated by the Governor to the Committee.

matter, to have any weight; for, whose claim upon the Bank could be so good as that of the *holders of the Promissory notes*? And who were “the public” but the holders of these notes? But, as if it had been resolved to leave no room even for this miserable attempt at excuse, the Minute of the Directors of the 24th of February, expressly says, that it was “*alarm for the safety of the HOUSE*” that sent the deputation to ask for the *interference* of Mr. Pitt; alarm for the safety of the HOUSE, and not any motive at all connected with the public service or the public good.

Having now pulled aside the curtain; having laid the whole thing bare to your view; having placed the application to Parliament in its true light; I shall, in my next, lay before you an account of the *measures*, which the Parliament adopted, and which have, under one pretence or another, been continued in force to this day.

In the meanwhile, I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful friend,

W^m. COBBETT.

State Prison, Newgate, Thursday,

October 25, 1810.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PORTUGAL.—I have little to add to what was said in my last, closing at page 721, where we left nothing wanting but the mere *date* and *manner* of MASSENA’S overthrow.—The wind has been foul for some days past, and, of course, no intelligence could be expected. The public curiosity seems, however, to have a good deal abated; and, as to *anxiety*, there appears (from the language of the public prints) not to be a particle of that remaining in any man’s mind.—The prospect being so fair; the public opinion being unanimous; and the matter being settled, that the foe must be exterminated, or nearly so, it was not my intention to say a word more upon the subject, till the hour came for me to record the last acts of the campaign. But, the Morning Post news-paper has published a paragraph, which calls upon me for a word or two.—This paragraph treats of *numbers*, a point upon which I am, I will confess, rather tenacious. It had, some days before, given a statement, apparently *official*, and, indeed, said to be from *official returns*, of the strength of the allied army,

which it made amount to only about 50 thousand men. At this the TIMES and the MORNING CHRONICLE took fire; as well they might, after this same print had repeatedly stated the allied *regular* force at little short of double that number, and after the recent dispatches from Lord Viscount Talavera, who said, that, with the exception of his trifling loss at the Victory of Busaço, he had not lost a man, or, at least so I understood his dispatch.—I began the literary campaign by showing, that we were *paying* 60 thousand fighting men in Portugal. We have been informed of the arrival of re-inforcements to the amount of 10 thousand men; so that, if we deduct the garrison of Almeida (who, by the by came, we were told, to us again) and the men lost at Busaço, we must still have, according to the original account, nearly 70 thousand fighting men, regular troops; and, we well know, that they are now all got into a small compass; all immediately under the command of Lord Talavera.—Yet does the Morning Post now put the allied army at 50 thousand men! Nay, and that print most grossly abuses all those, who are dissatisfied with its statements. The ground of abuse is this: *We* are said to swell out the amount of the allied army for the purpose of *lessening the glory* of the approaching victory; and, the TIMES and CHRONICLE are accused of enlisting themselves under SERJEANT COBBETT for the purpose of making the world believe, *that the victory will have nothing glorious in it*.—There is a small mistake, or, rather omission; for Serjeant Cobbett’s proposition was a *conditional* one. There was an *if* in it. It was this: “*They*” (the Morning Post and Courier) “have proclaimed to the world facts, “which, IF TRUE, put it completely out “of the power of our general in Portugal “to gain any victory over Massena, that “shall be worthy of the epithet *glorious*; “and which would render defeat *infamy*.”—This *if* the Morning Post has omitted; and, well it might; for the proposition, as it here stands, is incontrovertible.—On the 17th of September the Courier newspaper published the following statement of the numbers of the allied army.

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| “ English Army | 30,000 |
| “ Portuguese Regulars | 59,755 |
| “ Portuguese Militia | 89,755 |
| “ Total | 52,848 |
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Now, we know that our loss has been a mere trifle; we know that 10 thousand *English* and *Brunswicker* regulars have since joined; we know that *all* the regulars and part of the militia are with Lord Talavera; and, therefore I leave the public to judge of the truth of the statements, which the *Morning Post* and *Courier* are now giving to the world.—Which of their statements is true, or which false, I cannot pretend to say; but, that *one* of them must be false is certain, though, if my opinion were asked, I should say that the latter was, and that we have an army greatly superior in numbers to that of Massena; which is, indeed, to be inferred from Lord Talavera's own dispatch, for he says nothing at all about the relative strength of the two armies, and he took good care to say much about that in the affair of Talavera, the place where he won the victory that gave him his title and his pension for three generations.—As to the circumstance of the other papers having enlisted under a *Serjeant*, all that I need say upon that is, that the famous *Convention of the HELDER* was not less real, because one of the parties to it had been, but a few years before, a *private soldier* in the French grenadiers, and who was, not long afterwards, *Embassador* at the Court of Berlin. Truth is truth, let it come from whom it may; and, if the *Morning Post* and the *Courier* had, all along, adhered to the truth, they would not have experienced their present difficulties, and the question of the relative strength of the armies would not have been involved in its present uncertainty; an uncertainty not now easily removed, and which will, in all probability, greatly deduct from the glory of that Victory, which 'ere now, has, in all probability (if our latest intelligence be correct) been achieved by the allied army to the confusion and consternation of the foe.—This accusation, against the *TIMES* and *MORNING CHRONICLE*, of endeavouring to swell out our numbers comes much *too late*. It should have been made, if at all, long ago. It looks awkward at this moment. Not that I can suppose it to proceed from any latent fears of failure, which, really, appears to me to be impossible; morally, and almost physically, impossible. The allied army is full of health; it has an abundance of provisions and stores of all sorts; it is well lodged in houses and huts; it is covered by some of the strongest lines in the world, mounted with a thousand pieces of ar-

tillery; it is guarded and supported on its flanks by the sea, by the Tagus, and by gun-boats and sloops of war: while the foe is wasting away by sickness; is in a starving condition; has neither stores nor artillery, except what he has been able to drag along with him; has a country in his rear all inimical to him and all desolated; is uncovered and exposed to every storm; is wholly unsupported by either water or shipping; and can receive no assistance from any quarter. Well may it be conjectured, and, indeed, it is *positively said*, that Massena has been *urged on* by Buonaparté. Deserters and prisoners have, it is said, given us this news; and, this explains the cause of Massena's rushing on into such manifest perdition. But, let us not, in addition to all this, want to make the world believe that our Victory has been gained (for gained it must now have been) with *inferior numbers*, such a statement being in direct contradiction to every statement heretofore made by our Ministerial writers.

SPANISH CORTES.—The meeting of this assembly has been recorded in the Official Papers, at page 731; and, the English reader will, I am certain, be much gratified with what they have already done.—They have laid down, as fixed principles, that they, as representatives of the people, have a right to elect their chief magistrate, and, of course, that Joseph is not their lawful king, because the transfer of the sovereignty to him *was without the nation's consent*. They have decreed, that the chief magistrate, or executive power, is *responsible to them*; and that in them, as the representatives of the people, resides *the sovereignty of the nation*. They have decreed, that to them, as representatives of the people, belongs the title of *Majesty*; that the executive department shall be called by the title of *Highness*; and that in them and them alone shall reside the *legislative functions*.

—Having thus (See page 731 and onwards) laid down the great principles of the constitution; having taken to themselves the powers, which they look upon as their right, in virtue of their quality of representatives of the people, they have next proceeded to a measure intended to exclude corruption from amongst themselves; and, with that view, have decreed, that *no member* of the Cortes shall, *during the time of his being a member, and for one year afterwards*, receive any PENSION,

or hold any PLACE OF EMOLUMENT, or receive any TITLE OF HONOUR OR DIGNITY; except in the way of his *profession* as a soldier, sailor, or clergyman, or in consequence of some signal and well-known service to the public.—Upon a regulation like this it is, I trust, unnecessary to make any eulogium, it being so perfectly in unison with the spirit of one of the very best principles of our own Constitution, as laid down and enacted in that great Constitutional Law, the ACT OF SETTLEMENT, by which Act it was, that the present family was raised to the throne of this kingdom.—Not in this light, however, does this inestimable decree, a decree which revives the hopes of all the real friends of the people of Spain; not in this light is this admirable decree viewed by the writer of the COURIER news-paper, who, however, though a *ministerial* writer, does not, in this respect, I trust, speak the sentiments of any one but himself, it being as clear as the sun at noon day, that, if the Cortes be not now supported, the cause of Spain is gone for ever.—This is a question of vital importance. The decree of exclusion *has passed*. It is become the corner stone of the Constitution of Spain; and, as every friend of freedom must now wish success to the Spanish cause, let us hear what this writer has to say against this all-important decree.—“They” (the Cortes) “have passed a decree, declaring that no Member of the Cortes shall, accept during the continuation of his functions, and for a year afterwards, any executive place. This decree, we see, has been highly praised in this country; and, indeed, it carries upon the face of it the features of great patriotism and disinterestedness. But Englishmen are disposed to reflection; their eyes are turned not only to the future but to the past; they refer to the evidence and experience of their history, and they remember the *Self-denying Ordinance* of the *Independents*. It excluded the Members of both Houses from all civil and military employments; and though the Presbyterians had the best of the argument; though they shewed that such an ordinance was contrary to the principles of ancient times, that the Greeks and Romans, the most passionate lovers of liberty, had never admitted such a distinction between the civil and military powers, that, on the contrary, they had ever entrusted to their Senators the

“command of their armies, the *Independents*, with Cromwell at their head, succeeded in carrying the ordinance through both Houses—*And Cromwell was the first person that violated it!* Being at the time a Lieutenant General in the army as well as a Member of the House of Commons, he should have resigned his command with other Members who had also military commissions: “but “this impartiality,” says Hume, “would “have disappointed all the views of “those who had introduced the self-denying ordinance.” Fairfax, who “was entirely governed by Cromwell, wrote to the Parliament, desiring leave to retain Lieutenant General Cromwell for some days, whose advice would be useful in supplying the place of the Officers who had resigned. Shortly after he begged with much earnestness that they would allow Cromwell to serve that campaign. This self-denying ordinance was productive of no benefit (quite the contrary to England), whilst under a contrary principle she has risen to what she is at this moment; the only free nation in Europe, equally great in freedom and in power. The Cortes have undoubtedly much to correct, much to reform, but we are happy to see in the first use of their power a respect and love for their ancient constitution. Sorry indeed should we be to find them impressed with the presumptuous principles of the French Legislators, who acted as if the world had been in utter darkness before their time, involved in utter ignorance and brutality.”—Yes, the people of England, if they are not, will, I trust, become, a reflecting people; and, the more they reflect, the more they will, I am persuaded, approve of this Decree, and will, were it for this decree alone, wish the people of Spain success against all their enemies.—The *Self-denying Ordinance*, in the time of Cromwell did, we are told, produce no good effect; it produced “no benefit” to England. This is pure assertion, observe; but, why did it not? Why did it produce no benefit? Because it was immediately violated. Because it never went wholly and fairly into effect. This is the statement of this writer himself; and surely, then, the failure of the *Self-denying Ordinance* ought not to be cited against the Spanish decree, unless the writer means that we should, at his suggestion, assume, that the Cortes are as insincere as the *Independents* were, and

that their decree is a *mere trick* to get rid of some particular commanders, which assumption, however, would not help his argument out, because it would, in that case, produce *no effect at all*, and, of course, would not produce mischief.—The members of the Spanish Cortes are told by this writer, that the Self-denying Ordinance, and, of course, the Spanish Decree, are contrary to the best principles of freedom in *ancient times*; and that England, whilst under a contrary principle, has become the *only free nation* in Europe.—We will leave the question of English freedom, as at present *enjoyed*, for future discussion; but, we must deny, that the *principles* of the English constitution are hostile to the principle of this decree. For, in the Act of Settlement, before-mentioned, it is provided, that “No person, who has an *office*, or place of *profit*, under the king, “or receives a *pension* from the Crown, “shall be capable of *serving as a Member of the House of Commons.*” (See Act 12 and 13 William III. Chap. 2.) It is true, that this clause of the Act of Settlement has been modified; and, indeed, the effect of it has, in a great degree, been done away, by subsequent enactments, which allow such persons to sit; but, still, as an homage to this favourite principle of Legislative Independence, it is necessary for a Member who receives a place or pension, to be *re-elected* before he can again act as a legislator.—This modification of the Constitutional Act is disapproved of by a great part of the people of England, as numerous petitions upon the journals of parliament will prove. There is certainly a difference of opinion upon the subject. But, at any rate, complaints of long-standing, and from men of undoubted integrity and wisdom, have been made against the possession of places and pensions by our Members of parliament. The question has *never ceased to be agitated*; it is, at this hour, more agitated than ever; there are millions of men in this kingdom, who contend for the practice of the Act of Settlement in this respect; and, while the Cortes have this contest before their eyes, it is, I think, a little too much to upbraid them with rashness and ignorance, and to insinuate that they are treading in the steps of the French Revolutionists, because they have passed a Decree, which, if faithfully adhered to, must prevent all such disputes from disturbing the harmony between the people and the government in Spain, a

harmony, without the preservation of which it is utterly impossible to entertain a rational hope of that country's escaping final and complete subjugation.—The reader will, probably, not be at a loss to guess at the *motive*, which may have dictated the criticism, and hardly-disguised censure, of the COURIER, who appears to have been aware that the effect of this excellent and wise and virtuous Decree of the Spanish Cortes would not be confined within the boundaries of the Spanish territory; and, there are few persons, who pay attention to such matters, who will fail to call to mind, what was said, at the out-set of the Spanish contest, by those, who, like me, called upon the leaders in Spain to declare openly for political freedom, to tender *the people* a prize to fight for, and thus to *insure* success to their cause by beating up, to use a Sergeant's phrase, for the *hearts* of the best and most valiant of the people. The reader will bear in mind, too, our complaints against that CENTRAL JUNTA, who are now censured by every body, who did no one thing for liberty, who began their career by stifling the press, and under whom all the good spirit of the nation seemed to have expired in an instant.—The Cortes, from what has hitherto appeared, seem to be animated with a different soul. Their language and their Acts breathe the spirit of freedom in every line; and, the only thing now to be feared is, that they have been called together *too late*. Instead of issuing their Decrees from Madrid, they are issuing them from the Isle of Leon, where they are, in fact, little better than *closely besieged*.—What a *lesson* ought this to be! And what must be the mortification, what the remorse, of those who have had the power to take the lead in Spain, if, after all, it now should prove fruitless to appeal to the hearts of the people! At any rate, however, we have, in the present conduct of the Cortes, a recognition of the great principles of political liberty, and a proof that they have been, by experience, convinced, that, unless something be done to engage the *hearts of the people* in the cause, a country, however fortified by nature, and however populous, cannot resist the arms of a powerful invader. *Troops* the Spaniards are in no want of. They have troops and stores enough. What they wanted was an *animated people*. Such a people they now seem resolved to have. The Cortes are taking the true way to obtain that ob-

ject; and, what must we think of the English writer (not encouraged thereto, I hope, by any thing but his own turpitude) who can coolly set about the task of throwing discredit upon their laudable efforts?—I have been, by this writer and his twin-brother of the *Morning Post*, many times abused for my discouraging forebodings as to the contest in Spain, and for my want of zeal in the Spanish cause. As to my forebodings, they have proved to be but too well founded, as witness the present local situation of this excellent Assembly of the Cortes, who are penned up in a little island of Spain, while their fine country is overrun by invaders, and while the Capital of the kingdom is the seat of the intruding king. And, as to zeal in the cause, I must confess, that I felt none at all; that I felt perfectly indifferent about it, after I saw the line which the Central Junta pursued, and which appeared to me to promise no good to the people in case of success. But, now the thing is totally altered. Now the language of Spain is what it ought to be. It is what I heartily approve of; and it is such as gives me hope in spite of every discouraging appearance. I now come back to the point at which I started; and, if the *Turtle Patriots* will proclaim another festival in honour of the Spanish cause, they shall have my hearty and sincere approbation, which shall, too, not be withheld from the Odes that even poet Fitzgerald may grind in praise of the CORTES.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM. — *Kent Meeting.*—On the 22nd instant a Meeting, pursuant to notice and requisition, was held, at Maidstone, for the County of Kent, to consider of a Petition to parliament for a Reform in the Commons' House. The High Sheriff, JAMES BURTON, Esq. was in the chair. The meeting was very numerous and consisted of all the real respectability of the County, as has been the case in every other county, where a meeting for a similar purpose has been called. —The petition was moved by Mr. HODGES, and seconded by Mr. FOOT, in two admirable speeches, and, agreeably to the report in the public papers, it concluded in the following words:—
 "The times demand this open avowal of our sentiments, and in the language employed to convey them we intend no disrespect; though we are persuaded that no words can be too strong to express our feelings upon this occasion. Therefore, we most earnestly intreat your

"Honourable House to undertake, BE-
 "FORE IT IS TOO LATE, in a true and cordial spirit, the measure of Reform upon principles, which, by conciliating the affections of the people, and restoring to your Honourable House its due weight and character, may rescue our country from domestic discord, and secure it from the foreign foe, give stability to the Throne, and perpetuate the Constitution."—I have no room to add any thing but an expression of my approbation, and of my sincere wishes, that these sentiments may be acted upon, as I am sure they are those of ninety nine hundredths of the nation.

W^M. COBBETT.

State Prison, Newgate,
 26th October, 1810.

P. S. JEFFERY's affair in my next.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

SPAIN.—Names of the Members of the Cortes
 (concluded from p. 736.)

D. Antonio Abadin y of Guerra, for the Province of Mondonedo; D. Ant. Payan, for that of Corunna; D. Juan Quiroga, for that of Orense; D. Jose Becerra y Llemas, for that of Lugo; D. Pedro Ribero y Pardo, for that of Betanzos; D. Luis del Monte, for the same; D. Ant. Vasques de Pargus, for that of Lugo; D. Manuel Valcarcel, for the same; D. F. Mondo, for Catalonia; D. Felix Aytes and D. Ramon Urges, for the same; D. Jose Vega y Sentmenat, for the city of Cervera; D. Salvador Vinas, for Catalonia; D. Jayme Creus, D. Ramon de Lledos, and D. Jose Castellarnau, for the same; D. Antonio do Parga, for the province of Santiago; D. Fr. Pardo, for the same; D. Vicente Terrere, for that of Cadiz; D. Fr. Riesco, for the Superior Junta of Estremadura; D. Gregorio Laguna, for the city of Badajoz; D. Vicente de Castro Lavandeyra, for the province of Santiago; D. Domingo Quintano, for that of Lugo; D. Andres Morales de los Rios, for the city of Cadiz; D. Antonio Llanneras, for the island of Majorca; D. Ramon Lazaro de Dou, for Catalonia; D. Alonzo de la Vera y Pantoja, for the city of Merida; D. Antonio Capmany, for Catalonia; D. Juan Herrera, for Estremadura; D. Manuel Martinez, for the same; D. Alfonso Nunez de Haro, for the province of Cuenca; D. Pedro Antonio de

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Aguirre, for the Superior Junta of Cadiz; D. Joaquin Montenegro, for the province of Santiago; D. Benito Mosquera, for the city of Tuy; D. Bernardo Martinez, for the province of Orense; D. Pedro Cortinas, for the same; D. Diego Munoz Tornera, for that of Estremadura; D. Manuel Luxam, for the same; D. Antonio Duran de Castro, for that of Tuy; D. Augustine Bahamonde, for the same; D. Fr. Calvet y Rivacoba, for the city of Gerona; D. Jose Salvador Lopez de Pan, for the city of Corunna; D. Jose Maria Conto, D. Fr. Munillo, D. Andres Savariego, D. Salvador S. Martin, D. Octaviano Obregon, D. Maximo Maldonado, D. Jose de Teran, *suplentes* (supplying the place of Deputies) for New Spain; D. Pedro Tagle, D. Jose Manuel de Conto, *suplentes* for the Philippines; D. Jose Caicedo, *suplente* for the viceroyalty of Santa Fe; the Marquis de S. Felipe y Santiago, and D. Joaquin Santa Cruz, ditto, for the island of Cuba; the Marquis de Puneourostro, ditto, for Santa Fe; D. Jose Mexia, ditto, for the same; D. Donisio Juca Yupangui, ditto, for the Viceroyalty of Peru; D. Vicente Morales, ditto, for the same; Don Ramon Felin and D. Antonio Suazo, for the same; D. Joaquin Leyba, ditto, for Chili; D. Miguel Riesco, for the same; D. Francisco Lispergardo, for the Viceroyalty of Buenos Ayres; D. Luis Velasco and D. Manuel Rodrigo, ditto, for the same; D. Andres de Llano, ditto, for Guatemala, and D. Manuel de Llano, for the same; D. Jose Alvarez de Toledo, ditto, for the island of San Domingo; D. Augustine Arguelles, ditto, for the principality of Asturias; D. Rafael Manglano, ditto, for the province of Toledo; D. Antonio de Aldana, *suplente* for that of Toro; D. Manuel de Arestogni, ditto, for that of Alava; D. Francisco de la Huberta, ditto for that of Burgos; D. Juan Gallego, ditto, for that of Zamora; D. Jose Valcarcel, ditto, for that of Salamanca; D. Jose Zorraquin, ditto, for that of Madrid; D. Manuel Garcia Herreros, ditto for that of Soria; D. Jose de Cea, ditto, for that of Cordova; D. Juan Quintano, ditto, for that of Palencia; D. Geronimo Ruiz, ditto, for that of Segovia; D. Francisco de la Serna, ditto, for that of Avila; D. Francisco Eguia, ditto for the Lordship of Biscay; D. Evaristo Perez de Castro, ditto, for the province of Valladolid; D. Domingo Duenas, ditto, for that of Granada; D. Francisco de Sales Rodriguez de Barcena, ditto, for that of Seville; D. Fr. de Escudero, ditto, for that of Navarre; U. Fr. Gonzalez,

ditto, for that of Jaen; D. Esteban Palacios, ditto, for the Caraccas; D. Fermin de Clemente, ditto, for the same; and D. Francisco Fernandez Golfin, Deputy for Estramadura.—They all passed forth at half past nine in the morning, with the Council of Regency, all the troops of the Royal Household and those of the army quartered here being drawn up; and walking to the parochial church, Mass was celebrated by the abovementioned Prelate: upon which, after the Gospels, and a short and plain exhortation from the Most Serene Senor President Don Pedro Quevido, Bishop of Orense, I repeated twice, in a loud voice, the following formula of the oath:—"You swear to the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Religion, without admitting any other in these kingdoms? You swear to preserve, in its integrity, the Spanish nation, and to omit no means to free it from its unjust oppressors? You swear to preserve to our beloved Sovereign Senor D. Ferdinand VII. all his dominions, and failing him, to his legitimate successors; and to make all possible efforts to deliver him from captivity, and re-place him on the throne? You swear faithfully and legally to fulfil the trust which the nation has committed to your care, guarding the laws of Spain, without hindrance to your making such alterations, changes, and modifications, as the good of the nation may require?" And all the Deputies having answered "We so swear," they passed, two by two, to touch the book of the Holy Gospels; and this being concluded, the Senor President said:—"If you shall thus act, may God reward you; and if not, may he require it at your hands." This was immediately followed by the hymn, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, and *Te Deum*, being sung with gravity and solemnity; and the ceremony being closed, they re-passed in the same order to the Hall of the Cortes. The Deputies having there taken their places, and the Council of Regency being stationed near the Throne, the Senor President pronounced a very energetic though short discourse, in which, pointing out the disorganization and confusion of the times in which they were installed, and the obstacles, almost insurmountable, presented by existing circumstances to the worthy and advantageous discharge of a trust so important and perilous; he concluded by bearing the strongest testimony to the patriotism and generous sentiments of the Council of Regency; adding, that they left to the discernment and intelligence

of the Cortes, the nomination and election of a President and Secretaries for that august Congress. With this the inauguration was ended, the Cortes remained installed, and the Council of Regency retired to their Palace, having observed in all these acts the majesty and circumspection becoming the most noble, generous, and invigorated of nations; accompanied by a joy and applause on the part of the people which it would be very difficult to describe. All which I certify as Principal Notary, NICHOLAS MARIA DE SIERRA.

Royal Isle of Leon, Sept. 21, 1810.

TURKEY.—*Proclamation of the Grand Seignior.*—August 20th, 1810.

To my First Chief of the Belief, the High Pontiff of the Mortals (Mufti); To my brave Caimachan Pacha; my eminent Ministers; my worthy Prelates; my very honoured Teachers and Professors of Theology, Explainers of the Koran and of Tradition; my Imans; the Great of my Court; my Seven Military Corps; my Agas, Officers, and Soldiers, &c. &c. —After my Imperial Greeting, it is necessary to inform you, that the treacherous Moscovites, those enemies of our Faith, persevere in their audacious resolution to bring the devices which their depraved souls have invented more and more into execution. They have already invested our imperial cities and fortresses with war, and further over-run the territory of the True Believers. They are not satisfied with putting the adherents of our Holy Faith, without distinction of age and sex, in chains, wherever they come, and to drive many of our plundered brethren naked from their homes to seek a shelter in the wilderness; but they menace us, the devout followers of the Holy Prophet, the adorers of the True Religion; we to whom power and command have been given by the Almighty at the express intercession of Mahomet, whose holy blood now flows in our veins, with further indignities. —Desirous of consulting only the happiness of our people, we have not hesitated to make known our pacific wishes; but the proposals we have received in return, have been too degrading, to make us hesitate in rejecting them—in every line of those proposals, the insatiable ambition of our foes may be traced—indeed, nothing but submission, say they, can save us from everlasting war.—I, for my own part, cheerfully embrace this latter alternative, rather than endure so great

a shame, well remembering the precepts of our Holy Prophet, as contained in the two following sentences of the Koran:—God has momentarily left you, in order to make you sensible of your weakness and dependance. Supplicate him and he will assuredly return; then with one hundred men who put their trust in him, you will vanquish two hundred enemies.—In another part, God says to the Prophet, assemble the true believers for battle: if there be twenty firm and brave men, they shall conquer two hundred; and if there be an hundred, they shall vanquish a thousand of their foes.—I entreat the assistance of the Most High; I pray for the spiritual influence of the Prophet. Full of hope, I hasten to share the labours and dangers of my brave troops, to put myself at their head; to rouse the valour of some, to confirm that of others, and to direct that of all: in short, to lead them to battle—to victory!—It is not my design to attribute the fruits of our victories to myself. No, the only aim of my ambition is to make the faith of Mahomet triumph; to frustrate the devices of our enemies, and if possible, to contribute to the fulfilling of his Holy Will. Though my design to put myself at the head of the armies has been known some time, fail not to renew it by a Calif, on receiving this Proclamation. Every Naib, who shall not make the inhabitants of the towns and villages under his jurisdiction join our army forthwith shall be suspended, and the religious Teachers shall lose their places. Without wasting further time, we exhort you to be watchful over the tranquillity of the empire in our absence, and zealous to promote its happiness.—For myself, considering the urgency of the occasion; the activity of our enemies, and above all, that good men ought not to be more slow in frustrating evil deeds than bad men are quick in executing them, I shall set out immediately for the army.—May the Prophet intercede for us—May the Almighty grant us the victory and cover our enemies with shame. Oh! that this may happen! The glorious issue depends upon the Divine Will; from him comes all success. He knows the justice of our cause; let us then with implicit confidence believe that he will crown our arms with victory.

FRANCE.—*Commercial Decree.*—St. Cloud, August 31, 1810.

Art. 1. There shall be formed at Paris, near our Counsellor of State, the Director

General of the Customs, a Council de Contentieux (Arbitrators,) composed of two Masters of Requests, and four Auditors, reporters.—Art. 2. Our Director General of the Customs, assisted by the Council of Arbitrators, shall fix the value of the cargoes exported and imported by all vessels having licences.—Art. 3. Each Auditor shall keep a register of the licences that may have been granted under the heads of the respective ports of each of the under-mentioned precincts, viz. from Embden to Cherbourg, from Cherbourg to Bayonne, from the Pyrenees to St. Remy, from St. Remy to the coast of Naples.—Art. 4. This register shall contain, for every vessel having a licence, the number of the licence, the date of delivery, the name of the outfitter, that of the vessel and captain, the tonnage, the assortment of the cargo, the day of departure and arrival, and the decision of the arbitrators as to the value of the imports and exports for each voyage.—Art. 5. The outfitter of a licensed vessel shall deliver in at the Custom House of the port of departure, the manifest of his cargo, and the value of the merchandize of which it consists, signed by himself and the supercargo of the vessel.—Art. 6. The Director General, or superior officer of the Customs, shall cause the kinds, quantities, and qualities of the produce or merchandize to be examined, and ascertain that they accord with the manifest.—In case of a voluntary fraud, the vessel and cargo shall be sequestered, and be subject to confiscation. Our Director General of the Customs shall report the same to us in a Council of Commerce, for the purpose of a definitive decision thereon.—Art. 7. The Superior Officer of the Customs of the port of departure shall transmit to the Director General the manifest of the outfitter, with the certified report of its examination. These vouchers shall be transmitted to the Auditor, who shall report thereon to the Council of Arbitrators.—Art. 8. The Council of Arbitrators, upon perusing the report of the Auditor, shall determine the value of the produce and merchandize composing the cargo.—Art. 9. His decision shall serve to regulate the value of the cargo that may be imported.—Art. 10. On the return of the vessel, the outfitter, the owner and the consignee of the vessel shall deliver in a similar declaration of the sorts, quantities, and qualities of the produce and merchandize composing the return cargo, and of the prices at which they may have been purchased at

the port of lading. This declaration shall be signed by himself and the supercargo of the vessel.—Art. 11. The Director or Superior Officer of the Customs, shall cause the sorts, quantities, and qualities of the produce and merchandize to be examined, and ascertain that they accord with the declaration.—Art. 12. He shall transmit the said declaration, and the result of his examination, to the Director General of the Customs. These vouchers shall be transmitted to the Auditor, who shall report thereon to the Council of Arbitrators.—Art. 13. The Council of Arbitrators, upon perusing the report of the Auditors, shall determine the value of the produce and merchandize composing the cargo.—Art. 14. If the value of the imports exceed by one-third that of the merchandize exported, the merchandize constituting such excess, shall be placed in real *entrepot*, and shall not be discharged therefrom, until the said amount of value shall have been covered by fresh exports.—Art. 15. If the value of the merchandize imported shall exceed by less than one-third the value of the exports, this excess shall be taken into the account current, and the outfitter shall be held bound, upon making a fresh exportation, to cover the said excess, exclusive of the value of the merchandize which he intends to import.—Art. 16. In all cases where the importations by a licensed vessel shall have preceded the exportations, the declarations and verifications shall take place in the manner prescribed in the third title.—Art. 17. The Council of Arbitrators shall fix the value of the imports, and determine accordingly the counter-value to be exported.—Art. 18. As soon as the cargo for exportation shall have been made up, the declarations and verifications shall take place in the manner presented in title II.—Art. 19. The Council of Arbitrators shall fix the value of the cargo, and strike the balance between the imports and exports.—Art. 20. The Decree of the Council shall be arbitral and summary, without documents, and proceeding merely upon a general knowledge of the matters in question.—Art. 21. This Decree being exclusively intended for the purpose of establishing a general balance between the imports and exports, cannot be produced at the Custom House with regard to the payment of duties, nor before the Tribunals, upon any pretext whatsoever.—Art. 22. Our Minister of Finance is charged with the execution of the present Decree.

ROME.—*Decree respecting Priests, 12th September, 1810.*

Napoleon, Emperor of the French, &c. has decreed, and decrees as follows:—The Priests of the departments of Rome and the Thrasimene who, from ignorance of the duties prescribed to them by the Church, and by our Lord Jesus Christ, shall have refused to take to us the appointed oath, shall be considered as enemies of the secular power, and declared incapable of exercising the sacerdotal functions within our empire.—NAPOLEON.

NAPLES.—*General Orders.—Head-quarters at Scilla, Sept. 26, 1810.*

Soldiers; The expedition to Sicily is postponed. The object which the Emperor had in view, by causing that island to be threatened, has been accomplished; and the effect of the attitude which has been maintained upon the Strait with so much dignity for four months, has even surpassed expectation. You are about to enter your winter quarters. And you, also, brave sailors, you are about to return to your families. You have done more than your duty; you have supported with a courage above all praise more than fifty combats, against a force three times stronger than your's, and the success which you have constantly obtained proves what you would have done against an equal one. Above all, you have solved one grand problem; you have proved that the enemy's flotilla cannot prevent even the smallest boats from crossing the Strait, and that Sicily will be conquered when its conquest is seriously set about. Receive the testimony of my satisfaction. I also testify the same to the land forces, who have powerfully seconded you. The zeal which you have shewn in answering the call which has been made to you, is a sure pledge for your king of that which you will always display when summoned for the benefit of his service and the good of the country. JOACHIM NAPOLEON.

SPAIN.—PROCEEDINGS OF THE CORTES.—*Liberty of the Press.—27th Sept. 1810.*

Arguelles said, that without the intention of bringing the subject completely under discussion, he could not do less than

call the attention of the Cortes towards an object of the greatest importance, and which he looked upon as a necessary preliminary to the salvation of the country; he meant the Political Liberty of the Press. He said he was far from wishing that they should immediately proceed to determine on a point of such high interest and material consequence; but that if the proposition should meet the approbation of the Assembly, they might appoint a Committee, which, taking into consideration all that has already been written on this important subject, might examine and investigate the question, and submit to the Cortes the result of their labours and their reflections, and point out the manner in which it might appear to them that the political liberty of the press may be fixed.—Zorraquin and Perez de Castro supported the motion of Arguelles.—A Clerical Deputy manifested some opposition.

Torrero, another Ecclesiastic, ascended the Tribune, and in a very animated manner pointed out the evils which had already been experienced from the want of the liberty of the Press, and the benefits which would result to us from its political freedom. He said that it was necessary the Cortes should proceed in the *opposite course from that which the Central Junta had taken*, substituting for the *criminal silence and mysterious conduct of that Government*, the publicity of their sittings, and the *liberty of writing upon political subjects*. The prohibition of that freedom had discredited the Central Junta from the first moment of its institution. The public, he observed, had a right, and it was even their duty to interest themselves in the conduct of their Representatives, and to warn them of the errors which they might notice in their proceedings; and which warning could only be given through the *medium of the Press*. It was always necessary to consult public opinion, whose echo was the Press. The want of the liberty of the Press was, at the present moment, an impediment to the labours of the Committee which the Cortes had appointed to consider certain questions relative to the august duties of the Executive Power.—Almost all the Members voted for the motion, and a Committee was appointed, composed of eight Members, among whom were Arguelles, Perez de Castro, Palacios, and Hermida.